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**SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION'S ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN ART TO HONOR
ARTIST HOWARDENA PINDELL, THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND
LETTERS, AND ART HISTORIAN ALEXANDER NEMEROV AT
2019 GALA IN NEW YORK CITY**

October 22, 2019

Essex House

160 Central Park South, New York

6:30 PM Cocktails | 7:30 PM Dinner | 10:00 PM After Party

New York, September 30, 2019 – The annual gala to benefit the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art will take place this year on October 22nd at the Essex House overlooking Central Park in Manhattan. This year's gala marks the 65th anniversary of the Archives and will honor the achievements of artist Howardena Pindell, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and art historian Alexander Nemerov.

Howardena Pindell and the American Academy of Arts and Letters will receive the Archives of American Art Medal. The Lawrence A. Fleischman Award for Scholarly Excellence in the Field of American Art History will be presented to Alexander Nemerov. This year, the Archives will highlight its renowned oral history program that has preserved the distinct voices and memory of the American visual arts community for more than sixty years. Together, these narratives weave a rich tapestry of firsthand experiences that amplify the individual stories of our country's visual arts heritage.

About the Honorees

Howardena Pindell is a painter and mixed media artist. Using materials such as glitter, talcum powder, and perfume, she experiments with a wide range of subject matter to defy the staid traditions of the art world and assert her place in its history. Throughout her career, Pindell has exhibited extensively, including landmark exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, and Spelman College Museum of Fine Art. Among the prominent group exhibitions in which her work has been featured are *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–1985* (2017, the Brooklyn Museum, New York) and *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* (2007, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles). In 2018, a retrospective exhibition of Pindell's work co-curated by Naomi Beckwith and Valerie Cassel Oliver, *Howardena Pindell: What Remains to be Seen*, was presented at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Pindell was interviewed in 1972 and 2012 for the Archives' oral history program.

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The **American Academy of Arts and Letters** was founded in 1898 as an honor society of the country's 250 leading architects, artists, composers, and writers. The Academy seeks to foster and sustain an interest in literature, music, and the fine arts by administering over seventy awards and prizes, exhibiting art and manuscripts, funding performances of new works of musical theater, and purchasing artwork for donation to museums across the country. Early members included Albert Bierstadt, William Merritt Chase, Childe Hassam, John La Farge, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Current artist-members include Lynda Benglis, Lee Bontecou, Vija Celmins, Chuck Close, Mark di Suvero, Jim Dine, Ann Hamilton, Mary Heilmann, Jasper Johns, Alex Katz, Maya Lin, Robert Mangold, Julie Mehretu, Catherine Murphy, Claes Oldenburg, Judy Pfaff, Martin Puryear, Susan Rothenberg, Joel Shapiro, Kiki Smith, Pat Steir, Wayne Thiebaud, and Kara Walker, among many others. The Academy's members are elected for life and pay no dues.

Alexander Nemerov writes about the presence of art, the recollection of the past, and the importance of the humanities in our lives today. Committed to teaching the history of art more broadly as well as topics in American visual culture, he is a noted writer and speaker on the arts. His most recent books include *Soulmaker: The Times of Lewis Hine* (2016), *Silent Dialogues: Diane Arbus and Howard Nemerov* (2015), *Wartime Kiss: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s* (2013), and *Acting in the Night: Macbeth and the Places of the Civil War* (2010). He was also the curator and writer of the catalogue, *To Make a World: George Ault and 1940s America* (2011), the exhibition he curated at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Gala Support

The event is proudly presented by the Archives of American Art with support from the gala host committee: Amy Bermingham & Charles Wilson, Mr. & Mrs. Norman Bobins, The Robert Thomas Bobins Foundation, Janice Carlson Oresman, Helen W. Drutt English, Susan Dunne, Barbara G. Fleischman, Martha J. Fleischman, Debra J. Force, Johanna & Leslie Garfield, Garth Greenan, Karen Z. Gray-Krehbiel & John H. Krehbiel, Jr., Agnes Gund, Evelyn Day Lasry, Raymond Leary, Leon Polk Smith Foundation, Linda Lichtenberg Kaplan & Dr. Louis D. Kaplan, Dorothy Lichtenstein, LLWW Foundation, Richard and Jane Manoogian Foundation, Joyce F. Menschel, Adele S. Merck, George Frederick Mead Merck, Bridget Moore, Marty O'Brien & Lisa Gordon, Deborah Schmidt Robinson & Perry Robinson, Barbara & John R. Robinson, Barbara Tober, Marica Vilcek, Diana Wege.

About the Archives of American Art

Founded in 1954, the Archives of American Art fosters advanced research through the accumulation and dissemination of primary sources, unequalled in historical depth and breadth, that document more than 200 years of the nation's artists and art communities. The Archives provides access to these materials through its two research centers, exhibitions, and publications, including *Archives of American Art Journal*, the longest-running scholarly journal in the field of American art. An international leader in the digitizing of archival collections, the Archives also makes nearly three million images freely available online. The oral history collection includes more than 2,400 audio interviews, the largest accumulation of in-depth, first-person accounts of the American art world.

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About the Archives' Oral History Program

Since 1958, the Oral History Program has preserved the distinct voices and human memory of the American art world. The Archives' oral history program creates unique, lengthy exchanges between interviewers and narrators, conversations that yield a richness of detail and a sense of character not available in other primary sources. These recordings chronicle the great diversity of the American art scene, augmenting and refining our perception of individual artists, dealers, critics, and curators and their social and professional worlds. Common themes, such as artists' educational backgrounds, working methods, sources of inspiration, technical innovations, and issues of patronage emerge across artistic mediums and across generations.

For more information on the gala and to purchase tickets, visit:

www.aaa.si.edu/support/gala

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For media interested in requesting to cover the gala and for additional information please contact:

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